

*Jean de la Taille's Saül le Furieux (1572):  
An English Translation of "De l'Art de la Tragedie" and Act I*

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

Jessica Schaffner

Thesis Advisor  
Dr. Donald Gilman

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Donald Gilman", positioned above a horizontal line.

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Ball State University  
Muncie, Indiana

May 2012

Expected Date of Graduation  
July 2012

Undergrad  
Thesis  
LD  
2489  
.24  
2012  
.5333

## Abstract

There are always works to be translated in the literary realm, especially among the works that date back hundred of years. However, this is a much more daunting task for the translator than if he or she were working with a more modern work, as differences in vocabulary and language inevitably present problems of meaning and interpretation. For my thesis, I have translated the introduction “De l’Art de la Tragedie” and the first act of Jean de la Taille’s *Saül le Furieux* written in 1572. I have used as my primary source Elliott Forsyth’s 1968 edition of these two texts, with Kathleen M. Hall and C. N. Smith’s 1972 edition as a secondary source. To overcome the difficulties of translation, I have consulted Randle Cotgrave’s 1611 “Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues” as well as other translation sites, such as WordReference.com. I originally translated this work by myself and then collaborated with my advisor, a professor and expert of the French language, to produce the best possible rendering.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Donald Gilman for advising me through this project. He has a mind for the art of translation, and where I strayed, he helped to get me back on the right track. I would also like to acknowledge Craig Schmidt, Katherine Harms, Betsy Glazner, and Anthony Rodriguez for familiarizing me with the process and art of translation, as I worked with them in a group setting under Dr. Gilman’s supervision to translate Robert Garnier’s *Antigone* (1580) and *La Troade* (1579).

## Introduction

When I set out to translate “De l’Art de la Tragedie” and the first act of Jean de la Taille’s *Saül le Furieux* (1572), I had a rather lofty vision for my work. I had thought that I might bring some revolutionary piece to the world of translation. However, I eventually came to realize that the revolution would take place in me; instead of showing the world how best to translate, the world would show me. When I came to the drawing board, I was an inexperienced translator; I did not know the problems to resolve and the difficulties to overcome. I had not imagined that I would encounter such seemingly impenetrable passages. I did not know how difficult it would be to find the balance between readability and accuracy. I am by no means an expert after this one experience with translation, but I must say that I now feel that I have a strong foundation of experience upon which I hope to build my translation skills.

Each literary work has its own personality that sets it aside from all the rest. La Taille’s writing style is rather long-winded as I came to find in his introduction to the play, “De l’Art de la Tragedie.” This portion was the most difficult of my project; punctuation and orthography were fluid, and this lack of structure results in fragments and run-on sentences and, in effect, produces problems in understanding and contemporary renderings. Sentences would appear endless, and one loses track of their main points. I struggled with knowing when (and where) to divide sentences and when to respect la Taille’s style. I added breaks and changed word order with my best discretion, but sometimes I left the sentence relatively unchanged in those respects, to convey to you a sense of his style.

Another difficulty I had with this project was due to the rhyme scheme la Taille employed throughout the play. For this reason, the natural sentence order was quite often inverted, and subjects, verbs, and other parts of speech were frequently in strange places or

completely missing (which was the case with many of his subjects). Again, I originally had lofty goals for this aspect of the play, hoping that I might be able to keep the rhyme scheme in tact. I realized rather quickly that this was an unrealistic goal; intelligibility and accuracy must take priority over stylistic concerns that risk obscuring meaning. Therefore, I regret that I cannot provide you with a similar experience of the English version of the play as la Taille's French readers would have had. It is, of course, always beautiful to hear the singsong lilt of a rhyme scheme, but I have done my best to keep my rendering as close to the literary integrity of the original work and therefore give you an accurate taste of it.

In spite of these difficulties, I have endeavored to present an accurate rendering of two important texts. "De l'Art de la Tragedie" presents a concise but relatively complete explanation of the precepts and practice of writing tragedy in sixteenth-century France. One of very few dramatic treatises in France, la Taille integrates classical concepts into Renaissance French style. In many respects, this brief treatise represents an integral link between Du Bellay's *Defense et Illustration de la langue françoise* (1549) and principles proposed at the founding of the *Académie française* (1635). *Saül le Furieux* (1572), considered by many critics as one of the greatest French tragedies of the period, reflects the application of these principles into practice. Both of these translations, then, introduce two significant texts to English readers for the first time. This thesis, though, is merely the beginning of an important project. Future students at Ball State University working for departmental or University honors will render into English Acts II to V. Furthermore, la Taille's *Famine, ou les Gabeonites* (1573) also requires equal attention.



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*Saül le Furieux*

Tragedie prise de la Bible,

Faictes selon l'art et à la mode des vieux

Autheurs Tragiques

*De l'Art de la Tragedie.*

A

Treshaulte Princesse Henriette De Cleves,

Duchesse de NEVERS, Jan De la Taille de

Bondaroy.

Madame, combien que les piteux desastres  
advenus naguères en la France par nos Guerres  
civiles, fussent si grands, et que la mort du  
Roy HENRY, du Roy son Fils, et du Roy de  
Navarre, vostre Oncle, avec celle de tant  
d'autres Princes, Seigneurs, Chevaliers et  
Gentils-hommes, fust si pitoiable qu'il ne  
faudroit ja d'autre chose pour faire des  
Tragedies: ce neantmoins pour n'en estre du  
tout le propre subject, et pour ne remuer nos

*The Madness of Saul*

A Tragedy from the Bible:

Crafted in the fashion of the classics and  
according to the poetics of the art laid down by  
the great authors of tragedy

*On the Poetics of Tragedy*

To

Her Highness, Henriette de Cleves, Duchesse

de Nevers

By Jean de la Taille de Bondaroy

Madam, although the wretched disasters that  
have as of late befallen France by our civil  
wars were so monstrous and the deaths so  
deplorable—those of Henry II, François II, and  
your uncle Antoine of Bourbon, along with so  
many other princes, lords, knights and  
gentlemen—that nothing more would now be  
necessary for the writing of tragedies, I gladly  
omit these stories, partly because they are not  
at all the proper subject matter and also

vieilles et nouvelles douleurs, volontiers je  
 m'en deposite, aimant trop mieux descrire le  
 malheur d'autrui que le nostre, qui m'a fait  
 non seulement voir les deux rencheutes de nos  
 folles guerres, mais y combattre, et rudement y  
 estre blessé. Je veux sans plus icy vous dedier  
 une Tragedie du plus miserable Prince qui  
 porta jamais Couronne, le premier que jamais  
 DIEU esleut pour commander sur son Peuple,  
 le premier aussi que j'ay esleu pour escrire, à  
 fin qu'en vous faisant un tel present, je puisse  
 quant et quant monstrier à l'œil de tous un des  
 plus merueilleux secrets de toute la Bible, un  
 des plus estranges mysteres  
 de ce grand Seigneur du monde, et une de ses  
 plus terribles providences. Or à fin que du  
 premier coup vous y rencontriez le plaisir que  
 je desire, j'ay pensé de vous donner quelque  
 ouverture, et quelque goust d'une Tragedie, et  
 en dechifrant les principaux poincts, vous en  
 pourtraire seulement l'ombre, et les premiers  
 traicts.

because I do not wish to aggravate our old and  
 new sorrows. Instead, I prefer to describe the  
 woes of others rather than ours, which not only  
 compelled me to witness two of our defeats in  
 foolish wars but also to fight and to be brutally  
 wounded in them. Without further ado, I want  
 to dedicate to you a tragedy of the most  
 wretched Prince who ever bore the crown, the  
 first ever whom God chose to command his  
 people. He is also the first whom I have chosen  
 to write about, so that in presenting you with  
 such a gift, I can by and by show the world one  
 of the most marvelous secrets of the entire  
 Bible, one of the strangest mysteries of this  
 great Lord on Earth, and one of its most  
 dreadful destinies. Now, so that you may at  
 this very moment discover the pleasure that I  
 wish for you, I have thought of giving you a  
 sort of introduction to and a taste of a tragedy  
 and, in interpreting the principle points, to  
 present to you only a glimpse and the major  
 characteristics of this literary genre.

<p>La Tragedie donc est une espece et un genre de Poësie non vulgaire, mais autant elegant, beau et excellent qu'il est possible. Son vray subject ne traicte que de piteuses ruines des grands Seigneurs, que des inconstances de Fortune, que bannissements, guerres, pestes, famines, captivitez, execrables cruauitez des Tyrans, et bref, que larmes et miseres extremes, et non point de choses qui arrivent tous les jours naturellement et par raison commune, comme d'un qui mourroit de sa propre mort, d'un qui seroit tué de son ennemy, ou d'un qui seroit condamné à mourir par les loix, et pour ses demerites: car tout cela n'esmouveroit pas aisément, et à peine m'arracheroit-il une larme de l'œil, veu que la vraye et seule intention d'une tragedie est d'esmouvoir et de poindre merueilleusement les affections d'un chascun, car il faut que le subject en soit si pitoyable et poignant de soy, qu'estant mesmes en bref et nument dit, engendre en nous quelque passion: comme qui vous conteroit d'un à qui l'on fit malheureusement manger ses propres fils, de</p>	<p>With that said, tragedy is not a popular form of poetry; yet, it is as elegant, beautiful, and excellent a form as is possible. Its true subject deals only with the wretched downfall of great lords, the inconsistencies of fortune, the banishments, wars, plagues, famines, captivities, and abominable cruelties brought about by tyrants—in brief, the tears and extreme miseries. It does not present those happenings that naturally occur everyday and for expected reasons, such as the man who would die from natural causes, or he who would be killed by his enemy, or he who would be condemned to death by law and by his own misdeeds; for none of this would easily move its audience and indeed would hardly draw a single tear from my eye. Seeing as how the true and single aim of a tragedy is to move and to incite the affections of each with great power, the subject of a tragedy must be so pitiable and poignant in and of itself that, although short and starkly presented, it impassions us, like the story of a father who</p>
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sorte que le Pere (sans le sçavoir) servit de sepulchre à ses enfans; et d'un autre qui ne pouvant trouver un bourreau pour finir ses jours et ses maux, fut contraint de faire ce piteux office de sa propre main. Que le subject aussi ne soit de Seigneurs extremement meschants, et que pour leurs crimes horribles ils meritassent punition, n'aussi par mesme raison de ceux qui sont du tout bons, gents de bien et de sainte vie, comme d'un Socrates, bien qu'à tort empoisonné. Voila pourquoy tous subjects n'estants tels seront tousjours froids et indignes du nom de Tragedie, comme celui du sacrifice d'Abraham, où ceste fainte de faire sacrifier Isaac, par laquelle Dieu esprouue Abraham, n'apporte rien de malheur à la fin; et d'un autre où Goliath, ennemy d'Israël et de nostre religion, est tué par David son hayneux, laquelle chose tant s'en faut qu'elle nous cause quelque compassion, que ce sera plustost un aise et contentement qu'elle nous baillera.

was sadly forced to eat his own sons so that he, without knowing, became a sepulcher for his children. Another such story is that of the man who, unable to find an executioner to bring an end to his days and his misfortunes, was given no choice but to do the sorrowful task himself, by his very own hands. Let the subject also not be about extremely wicked lords who deserve punishment for their dreadful crimes; nor, for the same reason, should it be about those who are perfectly good, people of nobility and of the holy life, like the story of Socrates, although he was wrongly poisoned. I will show you why such subjects will always be cold and unworthy of the name of tragedy. One example is the sacrifice of Abraham, whereby God tests Abraham with the pretense of having to sacrifice Isaac. This story, however, does not lead to any misfortune at the end. Another example is the story of Goliath—enemy to both Israel and our religion—in which he is killed by his despised David, a story that is so lacking that it creates within us a compassion,



<p>Il faut tousjours représenter l’histoire ou le jeu en un mesme jour, en un mesme temps, et en un mesme lieu; aussi se garder de ne faire chose sur la scene qui ne s’y puisse commodément et honnestement faire, comme de n’y faire executer des meurtres, et autres morts, et non par fainte ou autrement, car chascun verra bien tousjours que c’est, et que ce n’est tousjours que faintise, ainsi que fit quelqu’un qui avec trop peu de reverence, et non selon l’art, fit par fainte crucifier en plein theatre ce grand Sauveur de nous tous.</p>	<p>that it instead presents us with pleasure and contentment.</p> <p>It is always necessary to present the story or play in a single day, time, and place. Also, one must refrain from doing something in a scene that cannot aptly and honestly be done, like executing murders and other kinds of death. What is more, they should not be faked or done in any other way, for the audience will always be able to see clearly what it is, and that it is only an imitation of reality. Such was the case when someone, with too little reverence and with no respect for art, had, through dissimulation, the great Savior of us all crucified on open stage.</p>
<p>Quant à ceulx qui disent qu’il fault qu’une Tragedie soit tousjours joyeuse au commencement et triste à la fin, et une Comedie (qui luy est semblable quant à l’art et disposition, et non du subject) soit au rebours, je leur advise que cela n’advient pas tousjours,</p>	<p>As for those who say that a tragedy must always be joyful at the beginning and sad at the end and a comedy (which resembles a tragedy where art and disposition are concerned, but not subject matter) should be the reverse, I tell them that this is not always the case given the</p>

<p>pour la diversité des subjects et bastiments de chascun de ces deux poëmes. Or c'est le principal point d'une Tragedie de la sçavoir bien disposer, bien bastir, et la deduire de sorte qu'elle change, transforme, manie, et tourne l'esprit des escoutans deçà delà, et faire qu'ils voyent maintenant une joye tournee tout soudain en tristesse, et maintenant au rebours, à l'exemple des choses humaines. Qu'elle soit bien entre-lassee, meslee, entrecoupee, reprise, et sur tout à la fin rapportee à quelque resolution et but de ce qu'on avoit entrepris d'y traicter. Qu'il n'y ait rien d'oisif, d'inutile, ny rien qui soit mal à propos. Et si c'est un subject qui appartienne aux lettres divines, qu'il n'y ait point un tas de discours de theologie, comme choses qui derogent au vray subject, et qui seroient mieux seantes à un presche; et pour ceste cause se garder d'y faire parler des personnes qu'on appelle fainctes, et qui ne furent jamais, comme la Mort, la Verité, l'Avarice, le Monde, et d'autres ainsi, car il faudroit qu'il y eust des personnes ainsi de</p>	<p>diverse subjects and compositions that exist among these two kinds of poetic works. Now, the principal objective in writing a tragedy is to know how to arrange, construct, and craft it sufficiently so that it changes, transforms, touches, and turns the spirit of the listeners from this point to that, and that it makes them see joy turned all of a sudden now into sadness, and now the reverse, following the example of everything that is human. Let it be tightly knit, blended, cut, reworked, and above all restored at the end to some resolution and goal which one had undertaken to present. Let there be nothing that is idle, useless, or inappropriate in it. And if it is a subject that pertains to scripture, there must not be excessive theological discourse, like things that disparage the true subject, and that should be more fit for a sermon; and, for this reason, tragedy must refrain from presenting a dialogue of people who are not real and who never were, such as Death, Truth, Greed, the World, and others, for there could necessarily</p>
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<p>mesmes contrefaittes qui y prinssent plaisir.</p> <p>Voila quant au subject; mais quant à l'art qu'il fault pour la disposer, et mettre par escript, c'est de la diviser en cinq actes, et faire de sorte que la scene estant vuide de joueurs, un acte soit finy, et le sens aucunement parfait. Il fault qu'il y ait un Chœur, c'est à dire, une assemblee d'hommes ou de femmes, qui à la fin de l'acte discourent sur ce qui aura esté dit devant; et sur tout d'observer ceste maniere de taire et supplier ce que facilement sans exprimer se pourroit entendre avoir esté fait en derriere; et de ne commencer à deduire sa Tragedie par le commencement de l'histoire ou du subject, ains vers le milieu, ou la fin (ce qui est un des principaux secrets de l'art dont je vous parle) à la mode des meilleurs poëtes vieux, et de ces grands œuvres heroiques, et ce à fin de ne l'ouir froidement, mais avec ceste attente, et ce plaisir d'en sçavoir le commencement, et puis la fin apres.</p>	<p>be some people of the same resemblance who would find pleasure in it.</p> <p>There you have it regarding the subject matter of tragedy, but as for the art necessary to arrange it and to set it down in writing, one has to divide the work into five acts and to make it so that, the stage being devoid of actors, an act may be finished and the meaning somewhat realized. There must be a chorus, that is to say an assembly of men or women who at the end of the act relate what has previously been said. And it is especially necessary that one heeds this manner of remaining silent and asking oneself what could have been understood in previous parts of the play without it having been expressed and that one starts to deduce the meaning of this tragedy at the beginning of the story or the subject, or rather around the middle or the end of it (this is one of the principal secrets of the art of which I am speaking) in the manner of the best classic poets and of these great heroic works. This</p>
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<p>Mais je serois trop long à deduire par le menu ce propos que ce grand Aristote en ses <i>Poëtiques</i>, et apres luy Horace (mais non avec telle subtilité) ont continué plus amplement et mieux que moy, qui ne me suis accommodé qu'à vous, et non aux difficiles et graves Oreilles des plus sçavants. Seulement vous adviseray-je qu'autant de Tragedies et Comedies, de Farces, et Moralitez (où bien souvent n'y a sens ny raison, mais des paroles ridicules avec quelque badinage) et autres jeux qui ne sont faicts selon le vray art, et au moule des vieux, comme d'un Sophocle, Euripide et Seneque, ne peuvent estre que choses ignorantes, malfaites, indignes d'en faire cas, et qui ne deussent servir de passetemps qu'aux varlets et menu populaire, et non aux personnes graves. Et voudrois bien qu'on eust banny de France telles ameres espiceries qui gastent le</p>	<p>allows one to hear it coldly, but also with an expectation and this pleasure of knowing the beginning of it and then the end after that.</p> <p>But I would be too long in detailing these ideas that the great Aristotle, in his <i>Poetics</i>, and, after him, Horace (but with less subtlety) continued more fully and better than I, so I have relegated myself only to you, and not to the difficult and serious ears of those more knowledgeable. Only will I warn you that so many tragedies, comedies, farces, moralities (where quite often there is neither meaning nor reason but ridiculous dialogue with banter), and other games, which are created neither according to the true art nor in the form of the ancient dramatic works (like those of Sophocles, Euripides and Seneca), can only be works that are empty in meaning, poorly constructed, and unworthy of presenting an argument, and they ought to serve as a pastime for youth and popular pleasure, and not for serious persons. And I would like very much</p>
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<p>goust de nostre langue, et qu'au lieu on y eust adopté et naturalisé la vraye Tragedie et Comedie, qui n'y sont point encor à grand'peine parvenues, et qui toutefois auroient aussi bonne grace en nostre langue Françoisse qu'en la Grecque et Latine.</p>	<p>that one would have banished from France such bitter spices that spoil the taste of our language and that, in their place, one would have adopted and naturalized true tragedy and comedy, which, painfully, have still not emerged, and which nevertheless would have added as much good grace to our French language as they did to Greek and Latin.</p>
<p>Pleust à Dieu que les Roys et les grands sçeussent le plaisir que c'est de voir reciter et representer au vif une vraye Tragedie ou Comedie en un theatre tel que je sçauois bien deviser, et qui jadis estoit en si grande estime pour le passetemps des Grecs et des Romains. Je m'oserois presque assurer qu'icelles estans naïfvement jouées par des personnes propres—qui par leurs gestes honestes, par leurs bons termes, non tirez à force du latin, et par leur brave et hardie prononciation ne sentissent aucunement ny l'escolier, ny le pedante, ny sur tout le badinage des Farces, —que les grands, dis-je, ne trouveroient passetemps (estans</p>	<p>May it please God that the kings and nobles know what a pleasure it is to see the live presentation of a true tragedy or comedy in a theater such as I would well know how to create, and which was formerly in such great esteem as a pastime of the Greeks and Romans. I would almost dare to assure you that if these tragedies and comedies were properly played by the appropriate people—who, by their sincere gestures and their good speech that is not forcibly drawn from Latin, and by their brave and bold delivery, present themselves as neither the student nor the pedant and who, above all, do not present the banter of farces—</p>

<p>retirez au paisible repos d'une ville) plus plaisant que cestuy-cy, j'entens apres l'esbat de leur exercice, apres la chasse, et le plaisir du vol des oiseaux.</p>	<p>kings and nobles, I say, would find diversion (in retreating to the peaceful repose of a city) that is more pleasing than the diversion that I am told comes from the delight of one's recreation, from the hunt, and more pleasing than even the sight of the flight of birds.</p>
<p>Au reste je ne me soucie (en mettant ainsi par escript) d'encourir icy la dent outrageuse et l'opinion encor brutale d'aucuns qui pour l'effect des armes desestiment et dedaignent les hommes de lettres, comme si la science et la vertu, qui ne gist qu'en l'esprit, affoiblissoit le corps, le cœur et le bras, et que Noblesse fust deshonorée d'une autre Noblesse, qui est la Science. Que nos jeunes courtisans en haussent la teste tant qu'ils voudront, lesquels voulants honnestement dire quelqu'un fol, ne le font qu'appeller Poëte ou Philosophe, sous ombre qu'ils voient (peut-estre) je ne sçay quelles Tragedies ou Comedies qui n'ont que le tiltre seulement sans le subject, ny la disposition, et une infinite de rymes sans art ny science, que</p>	<p>In what remains, I take care to incur here, by setting forth in writing, the outrageous tooth and the still brutal opinion of those who, for lack of a weapon, condemn and scorn men of letters, as if knowledge and virtue, which exist only in spirit, were weakening the body, heart, and arm, and as if nobility were dishonored by another nobility—that of knowledge. For our young courtiers raise their heads as long as they wish, those who, honestly wanting to call someone crazy, only have to have him called a <i>poet</i> or <i>philosopher</i>. These courtiers are perhaps under the pretense that they know tragedy and comedy, but the tragedies and comedies they see lack the material and good organization, and have only the title and an</p>



<p>font un tas d'ignorants, qui se meslants  aujourd'huy de mettre en lumiere (à cause de  l'impression trop commune, dont je me plains  à bon droit) tout ce que distille de leur cerveau  mal tymbré, font des choses si fades et  malplaisantes, qu'elles deussent faire rougir de  honte les papiers mesmes, aux cerveaux  desquels est entrée ceste sottie opinion de  penser qu'on naisse, et qu'on devienne  naturellement excellent en cest art, avec une  fureur divine sans suer, sans feuilleter, sans  choisir l'invention, sans limer les vers, et sans  noter en fin de compte qu'il y a beaucoup de  rymeurs, et peu de poètes.</p>	<p>infinite amount of artless and empty rhymes  that produce a great number of ignoramuses  who meddle today in bringing to light (because  of the all-too-common impression, of which I  rightly complain) everything that drips from  their poorly formed minds. They create things  so bland and unpleasant that they ought to  redden with shame, for it was their minds  which produced this senseless idea that one is  born into the profession and that one becomes  naturally excellent in this art, with a divine  furor, without perspiration, without turning the  leaves of books, without selecting a proper  subject, without polishing verses, and without  noting ultimately that there are many who  rhyme but few poets.</p>
<p>Mais je ne dois non plus avoir de honte de faire  des Tragedies que ce grand empereur Auguste,  lequel, nonobstant qu'il pouvoit tousjours estre  empesché aux affaires du monde, a bien pris  quelquefois le plaisir de faire une Tragedie  nommée Ajax, qu'il effaça depuis, pour ne luy</p>	<p>But I must no more be ashamed of creating  tragedies than that great emperor Augustus,  who, notwithstanding that he could always be  prevented from writing by the affairs of the  world, had the satisfaction of writing a tragedy  called Ajax, which he has since destroyed, for</p>

<p>sembler, peut-estre, bien faite; mesmes que plusieurs ont pensé que ce vaillant Scipion avec son Lælius a fait les Comedies que l'on attribue à Terence. Non que je face mestier ny profession de Poësie: car je veux bien qu'on sçache que je ne puis (à mon grand regret) y despendre autre temps (à fin qu'on ne me reproche que j'en perde de meilleur) que celui que tels ignorants de Cour employent coustumierement à passer le temps à jouer et à ne rien faire, leur donnant congé de n'estimer non plus mes escripts que leurs passetemps, leurs jeux, et leur faineantise. Mais ce pendant qu'ils pensent que si l'on est fol en ryme, qu'ils ne le sont pas moins en prose, comme dit Du-Bellay. N'est-ce pas plus grande mocquerie à eulx d'engager leur liberté, et la rendre miserablement esclave, de laisser legerement le paisible repos de leur maison, de forcer leur naturel, bref de ne sçavoir faire autre chose que de contrefaire les grands, d'user sans propos de finesses frivoles, de prester des charitez, de faire vertu d'un vice, de reprendre à la mode</p>	<p>it did not seem to him to have been done sufficiently, even though many have thought that this valiant Scipio with his Lælius wrote the comedies that one attributes to Terence. Not that I make a living or a profession of poetry, for I indeed want one to know that I cannot (regretfully) spend any more time at it (so that one does not reproach me for losing the best of it) than the ignoramus of the court who customarily spends his time playing and doing nothing. Therefore, I give them leave to value my writings no more than they might their pastimes, games, and idle pursuits. But, while they think that he who writes verse is mad, he is, as Du Bellay says, no less a fool at prose. Is it not a greater mockery for those who write for a living to use their liberty and to enslave it miserably, to leave the peaceful repose of their house readily, to strain their natural talent, in brief not to know how to do anything else than to imitate the great writers, to use frivolous turns of expression without meaning, to reap charities, to make vice a</p>
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<p>des ignorants ce qu'ils n'entendent pas, et de faire en somme profession de ne sçavoir rien?</p> <p>Pour conclusion, je n'ay des histoires fabuleuses mendié icy les fureurs d'un Athamant, d'un Hercules, ny d'un Roland, mais celles que la Verité mesme a dictées et qui portent assez sur le front leur saufconduit partout. Et parce qu'il m'a esté force de faire revenir Samuël, je ne me suis trop amusé à regarder si ce devoit estre ou son esprit mesmes, ou bien quelque fantosme et corps fantastique, et s'il se peut faire que les esprits des morts reviennent ou non, laissant la curiosité de ceste dispute aux theologiens.</p> <p>Mais tant y a que j'ay leu quelque authœur qui, pensant que ce fust l'ame vraye de Samuël qui revint, ne trouve cela impossible, comme disant qu'on peult bien pour le moins faire revenir l'esprit mesmes d'un trespasé, avant l'an revolu du trespas, et que c'est un secret de Magie. Mais j'auray plustost fait de coucher</p>	<p>virtue, to take up, in the way of the ignorant, what they do not understand, and in sum, to make a profession of knowing nothing?</p> <p>To conclude, I do not have any beggarly imaginative stories here, like the madness of an Athamant, a Hercules, or a Roland, but rather those that Truth itself has dictated and that everywhere directly display a sign of their safe-conduct. And because I have been compelled to return to the story of Samuel, I have not taken much pleasure in seeing if this was truly him or his very spirit or rather some ghost or imaginary body, nor have I concerned myself with the question of whether or not one can have the spirits of the dead come back, leaving the inquisitiveness of this dispute to theologians. But as much as I have read, a particular author does not find this impossible, thinking that this was Samuel's real soul come back, as if he were saying that one can indeed have the very spirits of the dead return before the first anniversary of the passing and that it is</p>
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<p>             icy les propres mots latins de cest auteur              nommé Corneille Agrippe, qui sont tels en son              livre de la vanité des Sciences, alleguant Saint              Augustin mesmes (<i>au lieu où il parle de              Magie</i>): <i>In libris Regum legimus Phytonissam              mulierem euocasse animam Samuëlis: licet              plerique interpretentur non fuisse animam              Prophetæ, sed malignum spiritum qui              sumpserit illius imaginem: tamen Hebræorum              magistri dicunt, quod etiam Augustinus ad              Simplicianum fieri potuisse non negat, quia              fuerit verus spiritus Samuëlis, qui ante              completum annum à dicessu ex corpore              euocari potuit, prout docent Goetici.</i> Combien              qu'un autre, en ses Annotations Latines sur la              Bible, allegue Saint Augustin au contraire,              toutefois je trouve qu'Agrippe (homme au              reste d'un merveilleux sçavoir) erre              grandement (dont je m'esmerveille) de penser              que Samuël revint dans l'an de sa mort, veu              que Josephe en ses <i>Antiquitez (Livre 6)</i> dit              notamment que Saul regna vivant Samuël dix-              huit ans, et vingt apres sa mort, au bout           </p>	<p>             a secret of magic. But I have rather set forth              here the appropriate Latin words of this author              named Cornelius Agrippa, such words which              are in his book on the "Vanité des Sciences,"              attributing these very words to St. Augustine:  <i>(when he speaks of magic): In libris Regum              legimus Phytonissam mulierem euocasse              animam Samuëlis: licet plerique interpretentur              non fuisse animam Prophetæ, sed malignum              spiritum qui sumpserit illius imaginem: tamen              Hebræorum magistri dicunt, quod etiam              Augustinus ad Simplicianum fieri potuisse non              negat, quia fuerit verus spiritus Samuëlis, qui              ante completum annum à dicessu ex corpore              euocari potuit, prout docent Goetici.</i> Although              another, in his Latin commentaries on the              Bible, attributes to Saint Augustine the              contrary, I nevertheless find that Agrippa (a              man of otherwise marvelous understanding)              greatly errs (which astonishes me) in thinking              that Samuel returned during the year of his              death, in light of the fact that Josephus, in his  <i>Antiquities (Book 6)</i>, says, in particular, that           </p>
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<p>desquels on fit revenir par enchantements l'ombre du Prophete. Saint Paul aux Actes des Apostres (<i>Chap. 13</i>), adjoustant encor deux ans au regne de Saul, plus que Josephe, raconte là qu'il regna XL. ans. Je sçay que les Hebreux, et qu'aujourd'huy les plus subtils en la Religion tiennent sans doubte, que c'estoit un diable ou dæmon que fit venir la Phytonisse, et non l'esprit vray de Samuël. Mais d'autre part je voudrois bien qu'ils m'eussent interprété ou accordé ce que dit Salomon en son Ecclesiastique, qui parlant de Samuël dit ainsi (<i>Chap. 46</i>): <i>Et apres qu'il fut mort il prophetisa, et monstra au Roy la fin de sa vie, et esleva sa voix de la terre en prophetie</i>. Et si ma Muse s'est (comme maugré moy), en s'esgayant quelque peu, espaciée hors les bornes estroictes du texte, je prie ceulx-la qui le trouveront mauvais, d'abaisser en cela un peu leur sourcy plus que Stoique, et de penser que je n'ay point tant desguisé l'histoire, qu'on n'y recognoisse pour le moins quelques traicts, ou quelque ombre de la verité,</p>	<p>Saul ruled over Samuel for eighteen years while he was alive and twenty years after his death, at the end of which one brought back the shadow of the Prophet through enchantments. In the Acts of the Apostles (<i>Chap. 13</i>), Saint Paul, who attributes two more years to Saul's reign than Josephus had attributed to him, says that Saul ruled for forty years. I know that the Hebrews and the more subtle thinkers of today hold without doubt that it was a devil or a demon that brought about the Phyton, and not the true spirit of Samuel. But, on the other hand, I would very much like for them to have interpreted to me or to have granted to me what Salomon says in Ecclesiastes, who, in speaking of Samuel, thus says (<i>Chap. 46</i>): <i>And after he died, he prophesied and showed to the King the end of his life and raised his voice in prophecy from the ground</i>. And if, in erring slightly, my Muse (in spite of myself) placed herself outside the strict limits of the text, I beseech those who find it poor to soften their furrowed brows slightly more than the stoic philosopher,</p>
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comme vraysemblablement la chose est  
advenue: m'estant principalement aidé de la  
Bible, à sçavoir des livres des Roys et des  
Chroniques d'icelle, et puis de Josephe et de  
Zonare grec.

Or par ce que la France n'a point encor de  
vrayes Tragedies, sinon possible traduittes, je  
mets ceste-cy en lumiere sous la faveur du  
nom de vous, Madame, comme de celle qui  
presque seule de nostre aage favorisez les arts  
et les sciences, qui seront tenues aussi pour  
cette cause de vous publier à la posterité, pour  
luy recommander vostre gentil esprit, sçavoir  
et courtoisie, à fin qu'elle entende que vous  
avez quelquefois fait cas de ceulx qui ont  
quelque chose outre ce vulgaire ignorant et  
barbare. Car j'ay autrefois conclud que vous  
serez ma seule Muse, mon Phœbus, mon  
Parnasse, et le seul but où je rapporteray mes

and to realize that I have not at all disguised  
the story to the point that one may not at least  
recognize some characteristics in it or some  
shadow of the truth. For the plot has come  
about consistent with truth, as my story was  
primarily aided by the Bible, that is to say, the  
books of Kings and Chronicles of the Bible,  
and then by Josephus and the Greek Zonaras.

Now, because France does not yet have any  
true tragedies, except possibly translations, I  
bring this one to light in honor of your name,  
Madam, as someone who, practically alone in  
our age, favors the arts and sciences. Also for  
this reason, it is my hope that these tragedies  
will proclaim you to future generations, to  
recommend your noble spirit, your knowledge,  
and your graciousness, so that one may know  
that you have sometimes championed those  
who have gone beyond the ignorant and  
barbaric populace. For I have heretofore  
concluded that you will be my sole Muse, my  
Phœbus, my Parnassus, and the sole purpose

escripts. Mais il semble qu'il ne me souvienn  
plus que je fais icy une Epistre et non un Livre.

Pour donc faire fin, je supplie Dieu, Madame,  
qu'il n'advienne à vous, ny à vostre excellente  
maison, chose dont on puisse faire Tragedie.

#### Invocation a Dieu

Je ne daigne invoquer ces Muses en mes vers,  
Ne ma Thalie aussi de qui mon nom se tire,  
Je ne daignerois plus de ces Fables escrire,  
N'invoquer le secours d'un tas de Dieux  
divers:

Je t'invoque plustost Seigneur de l'univers,  
Vien-t'en à moy de grace et ton esprit  
m'inspire,  
A fin que par mes vers à ton beau Ciel j'aspire,  
Non point aux vains honneurs d'un tas de  
lauriers verds:  
Vien conduire ma plume, à fin qu'à ton  
honneur

which will yield my writings. But it seems I no  
longer remember that I am writing here an  
epistle and not a book.

Therefore, Madam, to conclude, I beseech God  
that there may not befall you nor your excellent  
house anything from which one might create a  
tragedy.

#### An Invocation to God

I do not deign to call upon these Muses in my  
verses,  
Nor my Thalia, from whose name mine is also  
taken,

I would no longer deign to write these Fables,  
Nor invoke the aid of several various gods.  
Rather I call upon you, Lord of the universe;  
Come to me with your grace and may your  
spirit inspire me,  
So that by my verses I may aspire to your  
magnificent Heaven,  
And not at all to the vain honor of an  
abundance of green laurels.



Le premier je describe avecques un hault style,  
Le premier Roy qu'au Monde as esleu d'un  
clin d'yeux:

Aiant tant de faveurs, je te promets Seigneur,  
De ne chanter que toy, faisant ton Evangile,  
Ta grandeur et ton nom retentir jusqu'aux  
Cieulx.

#### L'Argument Pris du Premier Livre des Roys

Le Prophete Samuël avoit un jour commandé à  
Saül (qui est le Roy que Dieu esleut jadis à la  
requeste du people d'Israël) qu'il eust à mettre  
à sac, et à mort, non seulement les personnes,  
mais tout ce qui respireroit dans une ville  
nommee Amalec, à cause d'une vieille offense  
dont la divine Majesté se vouloit lors ressentir.  
Ce que n'ayant du tout executé Saül, ains ayant  
par mesgarde, ou par quelque raison humaine,  
reservé le plus beau bestail (comme en

Come to guide my pen, so that at your honor,  
I may depict my first subject with a noble  
style,

The first King whom you appointed to the  
World in the blink of an eye:

Having so many favors, I promise you, my  
Lord,

To only sing of you, making your Gospel,  
Your greatness, and your name resound to the  
Heavens.

#### The Argument from the First Book of Kings<sup>i</sup>

One day, the prophet Samuel had commanded  
Saul (who is the King that God chose long ago  
at the request of the people of Israel) to put to  
pillage and death not only the people but  
everything that should breathe in a city named  
Amalek, due to an old offense of which the  
divine majesty then desired revenge. Saul did  
not thoroughly execute this command, but  
rather, either by carelessness or by some  
humane reason, he spared the most beautiful

intention d'en faire sacrifice à Dieu) et aiant pour quelque respect sauvé vif d'un tel massacre Agag le Roy de ces Amalechites: il ne cessa depuis d'estre en la male-grace de Dieu, d'aller en decadence, et de perdre par intervalle son sens (luy qui avoit eu du commencement tant de triomphes, de biens et d'honneurs) tant qu'à la fin Dieu luy suscite icy un puissant ennemy, à sçavoir Achis Roy des Philistins: et luy advindrent les pitoyables choses que facilement (tout cela presupposé) on entendra assez par le discours de la Tragedie.

*Saül le Furieux*

Les Personnages

Le Roy Saül

Jonathe—*fi ls de Saül*

Abinade—*fi ls de Saül*

Melchis—*fi ls de Saül*

Le Premier Escuyer—*de Saül*

beasts (as if with the intention of sacrificing them for God) and, out of some kind of respect, spared the king Agag of these Amalekites from such a massacre. He has not since ceased to be in the ill grace of God, to go about in decadence, and to lose by interval his senses (he who had from the beginning so many triumphs and so much wealth and honor) so much that, in the end, God awakens here Achish, king of the Philistines—a powerful enemy for Saul to know—and pitiable things befall him (all of this presupposed) of which readily one will hear enough by the discourse of the tragedy.

*The Madness of Saul*

The Characters

King Saul

Jonathan—Saul's son

Abinadab—Saul's son

Malchishua—Saul's son

Saul's first esquire

Le Second Escuyer— <i>de Saiül</i>	Saul's second esquire
La Phytonisse <i>Negromantienne</i>	Phyton
L'Esprit de Samuël	Samuel's spirit
Un Soldat Amalechite	An Amalekite soldier
Un Gendarme	A cavalryman
David	David
Le Chœur, ou l'Assemblée des Presbtres	Chorus, or the assembly of the Levite priests
Levites	
 Acte Premier	 Act I
 <i>Saiül tout furieux, Jonathe, Abinade, et Melchis</i>	 <i>Saul (who is totally mad), Jonathan, Abinadab,</i>
	<i>and Malchishua</i>
 SAÜL	 SAUL
Las, mon Dieu, qu'est-ce cy? que voy-je, mes soldarts?	Alas, my God, what is this? What do I see, my soldiers?
Quell' eclipse obscurcit le ciel de toutes parts?	What eclipse obscures the sky in every part?
D'où vient desja la nuict et ces torches flambantes	What brings so early the night and these flaming lights
Que je voy dans la mer encontre val tombantes?	That I see in the sea opposite the sloping valleys?
Tu n'as encor, Soleil, parachevé ton tour, Pourquoy doncques pers tu ta lumiere en plein	Sun, you have not yet completed your revolution;



jour?

JONATHE

Mais, Sire, qui vous trouble ainsi la fantaisie?

Est-ce doncques l'humeur de ceste frenaisie

Qui par fois vous tourmente et vos yeux

esblouit?

SAÜL

Sus doncques, ce pendant que la Lune reluit

Chargeons nos ennemis: sus donc, qu'on les  
saccage,

Qu'on face de leurs corps un horrible carnage,  
Qu'on aille de leur sang la plaine ensanglanter.

Ne les voy-je pas là parmy l'air volleter?

Allons apres, à fin que de mon cymeterre

Je les face tomber presentement par terre.

Mais n'en voy-je pas trois qui me regardent  
tant?

Ça, que de mon epieu, puis qu'ils vont  
m'espiant,

Je les enferre tous.

Why do you thus lose your light in full day?

JONATHAN

But Sir, who disturbs you so with such a  
vision?

Is it therefore the disposition of this lunacy

That sometimes torments you and dazzles your  
eyes?

SAUL

Arise, and while the moon shines,

Let us attack our enemies; arise, that we may  
ransack them,

That we may make of their bodies a horrible  
carnage,

That we may go to bloody the field with their  
blood.

Is it not, therefore, our enemies whom I see  
flickering there in the air?

Let us go after them, so that by my scimitar

I may at once make them fall to the ground.

But do I not see three of them who watch me  
closely?

## JONATHE

Mais que voulez-vous dire,  
 De vouloir furieux vos trois enfans occire,  
 Et moy vostre Jonathe? Or voila l'insensé  
 Qui dans son pavillon tout à coup s'est lancé,  
 Et qui m'eust fait outrage en sa folle cholere,  
 Comme s'il n'estoit plus le Roy Saül mon pere.

*Abinade, Melchis, Jonathe*

## ABINADE

O que ceste fureur le prend mal à propos,  
 Tandis que nous avons la guerre sur le dos!  
 Ah, que n'est or icy la puissante harmonie  
 De la harpe, ô David, pour chasser sa manie!

Since they are spying on me,  
 By my spear, I shall strike them all.

## JONATHAN

But what do you mean?  
 That you wish furiously to slay your three  
 children,  
 And me, your Jonathan? Now, there is the  
 madman  
 Who in his tent has suddenly hurled himself  
 forward,  
 And who would have wronged me greatly in  
 his mad anger,  
 As if he were no longer King Saul, my father.

*Abinadab, Malchishua, Jonathan*

## ABINADAB

Oh this rage overtakes him at an ill time,  
 When war is knocking on our door!  
 Ah, that the powerful harmony of the harp, oh  
 David,  
 Is not here now to chase away his madness!

## MELCHIS

Mais David n'est icy, et dit-on qu'il s'est mis  
Pour servir d'un chef mesme au camp des  
ennemis.

## JONATHE

Non, non, toute l'armee à la fin s'est deffaitte  
De luy, tenant sa foy et sa loy pour suspecte,  
Et s'en va maintenant en son bourg Sicelec,  
Qu'on dit estre pillé par la gent d'Amalec,  
Et s'il en a vengeance il ne tardera gueres  
Qu'il ne vienne en ce lieu.

## ABINADE

Mais n'oyez-vous mes freres  
Le retentissement dont se plaignent les vaux,  
Et le hennissement que font tant de chevaux?  
N'oyez-vous point le cry, le bruit et la  
tempeste  
Du camp des Philistins qui contre nous

## MALCHISHUA

But David is not here, and it is even said that  
he has put himself  
In the service of a leader at our enemy's camp.

## JONATHAN

No, no, the entire army dispatched him in the  
end,  
Holding his faith and his law in suspect,  
And he now goes to his town of Ziklag,  
Which is said to have been pillaged by the  
people of Amalek,  
And if this has given him a vengeance,  
He will hardly delay in coming here.

## ABINADAB

But, my brothers, do you not hear  
The ringing sounds of which the valleys  
bemoan,  
And the neighing of so many horses?  
Do you not hear the cry, the noise, and the  
storm

s'appreste?

En voyant de si pres flamboyer l'appareil

D'Achis nostre ennemy, faut-il avoir sommeil?

MELCHIS

Mais, las, que ferons-nous? le Roy ne peut  
entendre

Au maniment public.

JONATHE

C'est à nous à le prendre,

En laissant nostre Pere hors de son sens aller,

Et parlant maintenant de ce qu'il faut parler.

Pensons doncques à nous, et avec diligence

Epluchons les moiens pour nous mettre en  
defense,

Ressemblants au pasteur, lequel d'un soing  
qu'il a,

Sur ses troupeaux paissants jette l'œil ça et là,

Pour voir si devers luy le loup vient des  
montaignes,

Of the Philistine camp that readies itself  
against us?

In seeing the blazing preparations of our  
enemy Achish who is so close,  
Should we not get some rest?

MALCHISHUA

But alas, what will we do?

The King cannot heed public affairs.

JONATHAN

We must take matters into our own hands,

Letting our father descend into madness

And speaking now of what we must.

Let us, therefore, think of ourselves, and, with

Diligence, examine our lines of defense,

Resembling the shepherd who with much  
weariness

Casts his eye here and there over his grazing  
flocks,

To see if the wolf is approaching him from the  
mountains

Ou s'il sort point des bois pour descendre aux  
campagnes:

Que si l'on est pesant, nos peuples recevront

Une grande vergongne aujourd'huy sur le  
front,

Nostre Cité sera pleine de volleries,

Nous serons exposez à mille mocqueries,

Nos Femmes aujourd'huy, nos Enfants  
orphelins

Seront devant nos yeux la proye aux Philistins.

#### ABINADE

Mais quoy, de les combattre aura-t-on le  
courage,

Veu qu'ils ont par sus nous de gents tel  
avantage?

#### JONATHE

N'est-ce pas Dieu qui peut en soufflant  
seulement

Mil et mil esquadrons deffaire en un moment?

Voudroit-il bien qu'on vist son Arche  
venerable

Or if he leaves the woods to descend into the  
plains.

If we tarry, our people will directly

Incur a great shame today,

Our city will be filled with ransacking,

We will be exposed to thousands of mockeries,

Today, our women, our orphan children

Will become prey to the Philistines before our  
eyes.

#### ABINADAB

But will we have the courage to combat those

Who, with their greater numbers, have such an  
advantage over us?

#### JONATHAN

Is it not God who, by merely breathing, can

Defeat thousands and thousands of squadrons  
in an instant?

Would he not like very much to see his  
venerable Ark

Honorer de Dagon le temple abominable?

Nous irons en bataille avec l'aide de Dieu,  
Plus seure que le fer, la lance, et que l'épieu:  
Fussent-ils cent fois plus, s'il prend nostre  
defense

Contre eux ses ennemis feront-ils resistance?  
Puis nous ne sommes pas aux armes apprentis,  
Qui tant de peuples forts avons assubjectis,  
Tesmoings ces Philistins, tesmoings sont les  
Moabes,

Et le cruel Naasés, et la ville de Jabes  
Delivree par nous, tesmoing le dur courroux  
De Dieu contre Amalec executé par nous,  
Tesmoings les Roys de Sobe, et la gent  
Idumee,

Qui de ses palmes vit honorer nostre Armee.  
Si doncques nous sçavons nos ennemis donter,  
Qu'est-ce qui nous pourroit ores espouvanter  
Aiant de nostre part la querelle equitable?  
"De deffendre sa vie est-il pas raisonnable?  
Joinct qu'encore la terre où sont nos ennemis,  
Et tous les biens qu'ils ont nous sont de Dieu  
promis.

Honored by the abominable temple of Dagon?

We will go to battle with God's aid,  
Sharper than the iron, the lance, and the spear.  
Even if our enemies were a hundred times  
stronger,

With God at our defense, what chance at  
resistance will they have?  
Moreover, we are not novices in war,  
We who have subdued so many strong people.  
These Philistines are witnesses, as are the  
Moabites,

And the cruel Nahash; and the city of Jabesh  
That we freed, which is a witness of the severe  
wrath of God

That we brought upon Amalek;  
And the kings of Sobe<sup>ii</sup> and the nation Edom,  
Which saw our army honored with its palms.  
If we therefore know how to overcome our  
enemies,

What could frighten us now, as we have an  
equal fight?

"Is it not reasonable to defend one's life?"  
Furthermore, God promises us the land

Ne nous tiennent-ils pas l'héritage fertile,  
Le terroir dont le miel, et dont le lait distille?

### ABINADE

Mais vous sçavez aussi combien est le hazard  
Des batailles douteux pour l'une et l'autre  
part.

### JONATHE

Nous vainqueurs, serions-nous vaincus des  
Infidelles,  
Vaincus autant de fois qu'ils ont été rebelles?  
Ne vit-on pas leurs corps infecter les chemins  
Jusqu'aux murs d'Ascalon, et jusques dans  
leurs fins,  
Estant suivis de nous quand David fit sus  
l'herbe  
Choir l'orgueil et le tronc du Geant trop  
superbe?  
Et de nos mains jadis s'en sauva-t-il aucun,  
Quand nous fusmes contraints de les  
poursuivre à jeun?

Of our enemies and all of their possessions.  
Do they not hold for us a fertile inheritance  
Of land which drips with milk and honey?

### ABINADAB

But you also know how great is the hazard  
Of uncertain battles for both sides.

### JONATHAN

Conquerors as we are, would we be conquered  
by infidels,  
Who were vainquished as many times as they  
have rebelled?  
Did we not see their bodies infecting the roads  
As far as the walls of Ascalon and to their  
ends,  
As we pursued them after David felled  
The arrogance and hulk of the overly proud  
giant onto the grass?  
And has he heretofore saved anyone of them  
from our hands  
When we were forced to pursue them in our



Devons-nous donc pallir de voir icy l'armee  
 Qui nous fait enrichir d'or et de renommee?  
 Vit-on pas un Sanson apprester aux mastins  
 Par un seul os fatal mil corps des Philistins?  
 Donc ne faut que par nous laschement se  
 destruisse  
 La gloire qu'on nous a de si long temps  
 acquise.

MELCHIS

Quoy? voulez-vous, Jonathe, ainsi sans autre  
 esgard  
 Jouer de nostre reste, et nous mettre au hasard?

JONATHE

Necessité nous force: et puis qu'il faut qu'on  
 meure,  
 Vault-il pas mieux mourir vaillamment à ceste  
 heure,  
 Qu'attendre les vieux ans pleins d'oisifve  
 langueur,

youth?

Must we therefore pale to see here the army  
 That enriched us with gold and renown?  
 Did we not see a Samson prepare, with a single  
 fatal bone,  
 A thousand Philistine bodies for the mastiffs?  
 Therefore, it is not necessary that we cowardly  
 destroy  
 The glory that was acquired for us for such a  
 long time.

MALCHISHUA

What? Do you therefore want, Jonathan,  
 without further consideration,  
 To gamble what remains and to put us at risk?

JONATHAN

Necessity forces us. And since one must die,  
 Is it not more worthy to die valiantly at this  
 hour  
 Than to await old age full of idle langor,  
 Enemy to virtue, strength, and vigor?  
 May one commend him who prefers weak old

Ennemis de vertu, de force et de vigueur?

Qu'on louë qui voudra la vieillesse debile,

Pour son grave conseil, pour son advis utile,

"Il n'est que l'ardeur jeune, et d'avoir au  
menton

"Plustost l'or que l'argent, voire encore deust-  
on

Esprouver mil hazarts, et par mainte adventure

Sacrer son nom heureux à la gloire future:

Hastons-nous donc avant que le destin Tardif

Nous face languir vieux en un lit maladif,

Et prodiguons disposés ceste mortelle vie,

Qui d'une autre eternelle apres sera suivie.

Je me tuerois plustost que de me veoir si vieux

Trainner dessus trois pieds mes jours tant  
ennuyeux,

Aux hommes desplaisant, fascheux,

melancholique,

Et du tout inutile à la chose publique,

Puis sans estre à la fin ny honoré, ny plaint,

Devaller aux enfers comme un tison estaint.

Pour doncques n'envieillir, allons nostre  
jouvence

age,

For its grave counsel, for its useful advice:

"It is only youthful ardour, favoring

Gold to silver." Still, one must indeed

Undergo a thousand dangers, and pass through  
many adventures

To hallow his happy name in future glory:

Let us therefore hasten, before the slow-  
coming destiny

Causes us to waste away, old, in a sickly bed,

And let us, ready as we are, consume this  
mortal life,

Which will be followed by an eternal one.

I would rather kill myself than see myself so  
old

Dragging on three feet my days that are so  
troublesome to men,

Unpleasant, angry, melancholic,

And above all useless to public interest,

Then, without being honored or bemoaned in  
the end,

Being cast down into hell like an extinguished  
ember.

Et son printemps offrir par le fer de la lance  
 A l'immortalité, recevant mille coups  
 Plustost en l'estomac qu'un seul derriere nous,  
 Allons mourir pour vivre, en faisant une eslite  
 De mille morts, plustost que de prendre la  
 fuite:  
 Mordons avant le champ couvert de nostre  
 sang,  
 Que reculler un pas de nostre premier rang.

#### MELCHIS

Là donc, mes Freres chers, qu'une brave  
 victoire  
 Face de nostre nom perenniser la gloire,  
 Ou recevons au moins un glorieux trespas,  
 Dont de mil ans le los deffaict ne sera pas:  
 Car quand nous serons morts une dolente  
 tourbe,  
 Tenant sus nostre corps la face long temps  
 courbe,  
 Nous ira regrettant et vantant nos valeurs,  
 Respandra dessus nous une pluie de fleurs.

Therefore, in order not to rot away,  
 Let us immortalize our youth and the  
 Springtime of our lives by the sword and lance,  
 Receiving a thousand blows in the stomach  
 Rather than one single blow from behind.  
 Let us go to die so that we may live, in making  
 a choice  
 Of a thousand deaths, rather than taking flight;  
 Let us die before the field covered in our blood  
 Rather than retreating from our high station.

#### MALCHISHUA

Therefore, my dear brothers, may a brave  
 victory  
 Eternalize our name in glory,  
 Or may we at least receive a glorious death,  
 Whose praise will not be defeated in a  
 thousand years,  
 For when we are dead, a sorrowful troupe,  
 With heads bowed over our bodies for some  
 time,  
 Will go to us regretting and boasting our valor,  
 And will shower upon us a rain of flowers.

Allons doncques, allons, c'est une sainte  
guerre,

S'armer pour le salut de sa native terre.

Aions tous aujourd'huy la victoire ou la mort.

JONATHE

Mais ne sommes-nous pas tous d'un semblable  
accord?

ABINADE

Doncques que tardons-nous, hé voulons-nous  
attendre

Que ce fier Roy Achis nous vienne icy  
surprendre?

Mais par un contr'assault monstons-luy qu'à  
son dam

Il assault ses vainqueurs.

MELCHIS

Voyons donc nostre Camp,

Allant de rang en rang, et par un beau langage

Faisons à nostre peuple enfler tout le courage,

Faisons-luy tenir ordre, à fin que le Soldat,

Let us go, therefore, as it is a holy war;

Let us go to arm ourselves for the salvation of  
his native land.

Let us all have today victory or death.

JONATHAN

But are we not all of a similar agreement?

ABINADAB

Therefore might we tarry? Do we not want to  
wait

For this proud King Achish to come and  
surprise us here?

But through a counterattack let us show him  
that

He assaults his conquerors at his own risk.

MALCHISHUA

Let us therefore see our camp

Going from rank to rank; and through beautiful  
language,

Let us make our people swell with courage.

Et tous nos gents soient prests pour marcher au  
combat,  
Divisants à nous trois nostre Armee commune,  
Et puis d'une bataille essayons la fortune.

## ABINADE

Tenons les premiers rancs: mais quoy? je sens  
mes pieds  
Estre, ce m'est advis, à la terre liez.

## JONATHE

Ja, ja mon cœur bouillant de donner la bataille  
Ne se peut contenir qu'à cest'heure il n'y aille,  
Mais mon pied m'a fait presque en chancelant  
tomber.

## MELCHIS

Ne voy-je pas d'en haut un gauche esclair  
flamber?

Let us have them keep order, so that the soldier  
And all of our people may be ready to march  
into battle,  
Dividing our general army among us three,  
And then let us try our luck at battle.

## ABINADAB

Let us be among the first ranks: but why? I feel  
my feet  
To be bound to the ground, as they are advised  
to be.

## JONATHAN

Nigh, nigh, my heart, brimming to go into  
battle,  
Can only be contained if it goes at this very  
hour,  
But, in reeling, my foot has almost made me  
fall.

## MALCHISHUA

Do I not see a sinister flash of light blazing up  
high?

## JONATHE

Ne laissons pas d'aller: est-il aucun presage  
 Qui puisse abastardir nostre ferme courage?  
 Non, non, sus donc, marchons; et vous, ô sacré  
 Chœur,  
 Priez Dieu ce pendant qu'Israel soit vainqueur.

## LE CHŒUR DES PRESBTRES LEVITES

Puis que nous prions pour tous,  
 D'aller en guerre avec vous  
 Nous sommes exempts et quittes,  
 Nous dis-je Presbtres Levites:  
 Allez donc Princes heureux,  
 Allez Princes valeureux,  
 Et par vos vertus guerrieres  
 Chassez hors de nos frontieres  
 L'outrecuidé Philistin:  
 Allez, monstrez le chemin  
 De combattre à vos Gendarmes:  
 Donnez premiers les alarmes:

## JONATHAN

Let us not abandon going; is there any omen  
 That can debase our steadfast courage?  
 No, no. Arise therefore, let us march on. And  
 you,  
 Oh hallowed chorus, pray to God as we go into  
 battle  
 That Israel may prove to be conqueror.

## THE CHORUS OF THE LEVITE PRIESTS

Since we pray for all,  
 We are exempt and freed  
 From going in war with you,  
 We, I say, the Levite priests:  
 Go, therefore, oh happy princes,  
 Oh valorous princes,  
 And through your war-like virtues  
 Drive from our borders  
 The arrogant Philistine:  
 Go, show your cavalrymen  
 The way to battle:  
 First, give the alarms:



Et puis que vostre valeur,	And since your valor, blood, and heart
Vostre sang et vostre cœur	From the time of the cradle
Des le berceau vous incite	Incite you to the salvation of Israel,
Au salut Israélite,	Show that, at the good reason
Monstrez qu'à bon droit du Roy,	Of the King, who, by his law,
Qui premier a par sa loy	First subdued Judea,
La Judee assubjectie,	Your inheritance has left.
Vostre naissance est sortie.	
Mais toy, Jonathe, sur tous	But you, Jonathan, above all
Le plus beau, gentil et doux,	The most beautiful, kind, and gentle
Que le Soleil voye au monde,	That is under the sun,
Et en qui sur tous abonde	And in whom, above all, abounds
La grace de tant de biens	The grace of so much good
Que Dieu eslargit aux siens,	That God bestows in his men,
Toy, dis-je, vertueux Prince,	You, I say, virtuous prince,
A qui le courage grince	In whom courage conflicts
De batailler, tu seras	With strife, you will be
Nostre escu, et chasseras,	Our shield, and you will chase away
Esbranslant ton cymeterre,	The enemy from our land,
L'ennemy de nostre terre,	Brandishing your scimitar,
Comme tu feis l'autre fois,	As you did at another time
Quand de luy tu triomphois,	When you triumphed over him

Et que tu pavois la voye	And you paved the way
De son sang et de sa proye.	With his blood and his prey.
Mon Dieu, qu'on seroit content	My God, how one would be content
Si tu en faisois autant	If you did as much
Comme tu en feis adoncques!	As you did then!
Mais ne te verrons-nous oncques	But will we never see you
Dessus un char glorieux	Atop a glorious chariot
Revenir victorieux,	Returning victorious,
Et la gent Israélite	And the people of Israel
Triompher soubz ta conduite,	Triumphing under your leadership,
Enrichie du butin	Enriched with the loot
Du rebelle Palestin?	Of the Palestinian rebel?
Tous ont desja ceste attente,	Everyone already has this expectation,
De baiser la main vaillante,	To kiss the valiant hand
Qui nous aura tant occis	Which will have killed for us
De peuples incirconcis:	So many uncircumcised people:
Lors chascun d'un nouveau Psalme	Then each new psalm
Mercira Dieu de ta palme.	Will thank God from your palm.
O que puisses-tu de bref,	Oh that you may, in brief, be able to
Portant sus ton noble chef	Rule your faithful people,
La couronne paternelle,	Carrying upon your noble head
Regir ton peuple fidele.	The paternal crown.

Mais, quoy qu'il en doive eschoir, O Dieu, soit fait ton vouloir.	But, whatsoever should happen, Oh God, may it be done through your will.
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<sup>i</sup> Although, according to la Taille, the material of this play comes from the first book of Kings, the events that lead up to and constitute the plot of the play can be found, for the most part, in the first book of Samuel in the 1769 King James version, particularly chapters 27-31.

<sup>ii</sup> This is the only name for which I could not find the translation in the Bible, so I have left it in French.